

CARPENTER NEWSLETTER # 2

Hi Fans!

Thought you'd like to hear a bit about the CARPENTERS midwest tour this past February. The going was rough as the weather was cold, wet and miserable. Driving conditions were horrible as roads were covered with ice and snow. They had a lot of driving to do because there were no airline connections between many of the towns where they were scheduled for appearances.

To top it off, both Karen and Richard took sick due to the extreme cold. Being acclimated to the warmer Southern California weather, their blood had thinned and in spite of the extra warmer clothing they had taken with them they got chilled to the marrow while driving and caught cold. Karen was the worst as her cold turned into the flu and laryngitis. On February 8th they played Kearney, Nebraska but finally had to stop the show and take Karen to a hospital. (They returned to Kearney the 24th of May to fulfill their February engagement.) The next day was their day off (the only one they had all month) so Karen had a chance to recuperate a little. A couple more trips to the doctors between Kearney and Cedar Rapids and she was back on stage the night of the 10th.

Washington's birthday found them in St. Louis bound for Weatherford, Oklahoma. They had played at Merimac College in St. Louis the night of the 21st and their next engagement was to play at S. W. Oklahoma State Univ., a distance of 569 miles. They were scheduled to take a 10:00 A.M. flight from St. Louis and arrive in Oklahoma City (72 miles east of Weatherford) about noontime. But shortly after arising to snow-filled sky they were informed that all flights to Oklahoma City had been cancelled due to blizzard conditions there which made it impossible for planes to land. They were assured, however, that landing conditions in Tulsa were much better should they decide to fly there and drive nearly 200 miles to Weatherford.

Troopers that they are -- they did. The driving distance, however seemed more like 2000 miles than 200 as they slipped, slid, and slushed through ice filled roads and blinding drifting snow. But at long last they reached Weatherford safely. Quite an accomplishment for youngsters who had earned their driving licenses in California and had never before driven in blizzard weather.

On their arrival at their motel where they had reserved rooms days in advance, they again received bad news. Their room reservations had been cancelled due to the large number of people that were stranded there. Every motel and hotel room in town was filled with visitors stranded by the storm.

When the students of S.W. State University heard of their plight, they invited them to spend the night at their dorms. There were 150 girls to greet Karen when she arrived at the girl's dorm weary from travel but grateful for a place to rest before the evening's performance.

They assumed that only a handful of people would brave the blizzard that continued to rage, to come out to their concert. They were mighty surprised when the curtain opened and they found instead, a very small handful of empty seats. They found it gratifying to discover that their efforts to reach Weatherford were not in vain. The students of S.W. Oklahoma State Univ. will forever be endeared in the hearts of Richard and Karen Carpenter.